

SURREY/WHITE ROCK,
BRITISH COLUMBIA

IDENTIFYING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

WHO

The Constituency Association of Surrey/White Rock used Ethelo to engage citizens in determining community priorities

GOALS

To foster a sense of ownership and transparency around the process of identifying and gauging public support around 21 local initiatives

HOW

Ethelo collected votes and comments in a seamless way, enabling citizens to engage dynamically in selecting community priorities

OUTCOME

A transparently shortlisted set of results, shortlisting 5 local initiatives with the highest level of public support

Ethelo helped funnel and analyze the insights of more than 40 movers and shakers in the City of White Rock in Surrey, BC. A total of 112 comments were collected, totalling a 42% participation rate and an average of 2.6 comments per user. The forum enabled the local MLA to identify community priorities at a time of citizens' convenience and to shortlist proposals with the greatest amount of collective support.

CONTEXT

Sponsored by MLA Gordon Hogg, the goal of this project was to identify high-impact initiatives that can make the Surrey-White Rock community more "caring, resilient, and connected". Ethelo was chosen by Surrey-White Rock Constituency Association because of its ability to identify broadly supported strategies and facilitate meaningful collaboration.

APPROACH

On June 25, 2014 Ethelo's team facilitated a focus group of nearly 50 community leaders and community members to identify a range of issues felt to be important to the health of the Surrey-White Rock community. Gordon Hogg, who managed the invitations, ensured the group brought high calibre participation by inviting what he called, "service recipients as well as recognized movers and shakers". Using world cafe-style approach, participants identified a number of issues and options for actions they could collaborate on as a group.

After the in-person consultation meeting, the Ethelo team consolidated the results, and collaborated with the MLA's office to draft background information and organize the 21 proposed initiatives into 8 different areas of focus. This information was entered into the Ethelo platform, and after a review period, the original participants were invited to initialize the public process online by weighing the initiatives and scoring the proposals using Ethelo's participatory interface. The platform was then opened for public participation, and promotion occurred over a two-month

period to encourage local residents to engage in the process.

RESULTS

More than 40 people voted during the online process and participants contributed over 100 related comments and suggested 6 new initiatives. Based on the votes provided, Ethelo's platform identified a shortlist of the 5 top proposals that would receive the strongest and broadest support from citizens (Fig. 3). These results, in turn, informed the Constituency Associations priority-setting for their efforts in government on behalf of the community.

The community meeting and Ethelo process was positively highlighted in the Peace Arch News, a local newspaper. Online journal Local Web News also profiled the consultation through an interview with MLA Gordon Hogg and Ethelo's CEO John Richardson.

